



APG 036716
(FTK 0307)

SIMULATION CIRCUIT PATTERN EVALUATION METHOD, MANUFACTURING METHOD
OF SEMICONDUCTOR INTEGRATED CIRCUIT, TEST SUBSTRATE, AND TEST
SUBSTRATE GROUP

5 Cross-reference to the invention

[0001] This application is based upon and claims the benefit of priority from the prior Japanese Patent Application No. 2003-344526, filed on October 2, 2003; the entire contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.

10

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates to a simulation circuit pattern evaluation method for evaluating a simulation circuit pattern which simulates a circuit pattern of a semiconductor integrated circuit, a manufacturing method of the semiconductor integrated circuit for manufacturing the semiconductor integrated circuit by evaluating the simulation circuit pattern, a test substrate having an aggregate of the simulation circuit patterns, and a test substrate group which is composed of a plurality of the test substrates.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE RELATED ART

[0003] Conventionally, as a preliminary step to a commercialization of a semiconductor integrated circuit, a simulation circuit pattern or the like is formed and a performance test of elements, an optimization of process conditions or the like is performed, in order to improve the yield (for example, refer to

Japanese Patent Laid-open Application No. 2001-44285).

[0004] Currently, in an optimization of a process condition for a wiring formation process, regular simulation wiring patterns are respectively formed with different process conditions on plural 5 semiconductor wafers for testing (hereinafter, referred to as a "test wafer"), and these simulation wiring patterns are evaluated to thereby detect optimum process conditions.

[0005] Further, aggregates of simulation wiring patterns which mainly have reference states are respectively formed with different 10 process conditions on plural test wafers, and the aggregates of these simulation wiring patterns are evaluated to thereby detect the optimum process conditions. Here, the aggregates of the simulation wiring patterns which mainly have the reference states are formed by combining plural parameters having two or three states as shown 15 in Table 1, but they are formed to have the number of appearances of the reference states to be the maximum. Incidentally, in Table 1, the reference state for a "first layer wiring formation width" is "0.3 μm ," for a "first layer wiring formation length" is "20 μm ," for a "second layer wiring formation width" is "0.3 μm ," for a "second 20 layer wiring formation length" is "20 μm ," for a "via hole formation position" is "center position," and for a "via hole miss-alignment" is "0 (zero)."

[Table 1]

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
No. 1	0.3 μm	20 μm	0.3 μm	20 μm	Center	0
No. 2	0.3 μm	100 μm	0.3 μm	20 μm	Center	0
No. 3	0.3 μm	200 μm	0.3 μm	20 μm	Center	0
No. 4	0.3 μm	20 μm	1.0 μm	20 μm	Center	0
No. 5	0.3 μm	20 μm	5.0 μm	20 μm	Center	0
No. 6	0.3 μm	20 μm	0.3 μm	100 μm	Center	0
No. 7	0.3 μm	20 μm	0.3 μm	200 μm	Center	0
No. 8	0.3 μm	20 μm	0.3 μm	20 μm	End	0
No. 9	0.3 μm	20 μm	0.3 μm	20 μm	End	10
No. 10	0.3 μm	20 μm	0.3 μm	20 μm	End	30
No. 11	1.0 μm	20 μm	0.3 μm	20 μm	Center	0
No. 12	1.0 μm	100 μm	0.3 μm	20 μm	Center	0
No. 13	1.0 μm	200 μm	0.3 μm	20 μm	Center	0
No. 14	1.0 μm	20 μm	1.0 μm	20 μm	Center	0
No. 15	1.0 μm	20 μm	5.0 μm	20 μm	Center	0
No. 16	1.0 μm	20 μm	0.3 μm	100 μm	Center	0
No. 17	1.0 μm	20 μm	0.3 μm	200 μm	Center	0
No. 18	5.0 μm	20 μm	0.3 μm	20 μm	Center	0

A: Simulation wiring pattern; B: First layer wiring formation width;

C: First layer wiring formation length; D: Second layer wiring formation width; E: Second layer wiring formation length; F: Via hole formation

5 position; G: Via hole miss-alignment

[0006] However, even in a case that an actual semiconductor integrated circuit is formed with optimum process conditions which are detected by a technique similar to the above-mentioned one, there 10 is a problem of ineffectiveness in improving the yield. This problem is possibly caused by the fact that, when detected process conditions are suitable for some of the wiring patterns, they may not be suitable for the other wiring patterns since wiring patterns in various shapes exist on a semiconductor integrated circuit to 15 be actually commercialized. Accordingly, it is conceivable to form

an aggregate of simulation wiring patterns which simulate all the wiring patterns used for the semiconductor integrated circuit. However, the formation of the aggregate of the simulation wiring patterns which simulate all the wiring patterns results in numerous
5 simulation wiring patterns, and thus it is impractical.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] According to an aspect of the present invention, there is provided a simulation circuit pattern evaluation method including:
10 designing an aggregate of simulation circuit patterns, which simulate a circuit pattern of a semiconductor integrated circuit, by combining plural geometrical structure defining parameters respectively having at least two states in such a manner that the respective states appear the same number of times in the respective
15 geometrical structure defining parameters; forming the aggregate of the simulation circuit patterns on a substrate; and evaluating the formed aggregate of the simulation circuit patterns.

[0008] According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a manufacturing method of a semiconductor integrated circuit including: designing an aggregate of simulation circuit patterns, which simulate a circuit pattern of a semiconductor integrated circuit, by combining plural geometrical structure defining parameters respectively having at least two states in such a manner that the respective states appear the same
20 number of times in the respective geometrical structure defining parameters; forming the aggregate of the simulation circuit patterns on each of plural substrates with a process condition which
25 is different for each of the substrates; detecting a process

condition which is suitable for the aggregate of the simulation circuit patterns by separately evaluating the formed aggregate of the simulation circuit patterns on each of the substrates; and forming the circuit pattern with the detected process condition.

5 [0009] According to still another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a test substrate including an aggregate of simulation circuit patterns which is formed by combining plural geometrical structure defining parameters respectively having at least two states in such a manner that the respective states appear 10 the same number of times in the respective geometrical structure defining parameters, the aggregate of the simulation circuit patterns simulating a circuit pattern of a semiconductor integrated circuit.

[0010] According to yet another aspect of the present invention, 15 there is provided a test substrate group which is composed of plural test substrates respectively including an aggregate of simulation circuit patterns which is formed by combining plural geometrical structure defining parameters respectively having at least two states in such a manner that the respective states appear the same 20 number of times in the respective geometrical structure defining parameters, the aggregate of the simulation circuit patterns simulating a circuit pattern of a semiconductor integrated circuit, the aggregate of the simulation circuit patterns being formed with a process condition which is different for each of the test 25 substrate.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0011] FIG. 1 is a flow chart showing a flow of a wiring formation

process of a semiconductor integrated circuit according to a first embodiment.

[0012] FIG. 2 is a flow chart showing a flow of a simulation wiring pattern formation process according to the first embodiment.

5 [0013] FIG. 3A to FIG. 3L are schematic process views representing states when forming a simulation wiring pattern No. 6 according to the first embodiment.

[0014] FIG. 4 is a schematic plan view of simulation wiring patterns No. 1 to No. 18 according to the first embodiment.

10 [0015] FIG. 5 is a graph representing a relation between a yield and a time according to an example.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

(First Embodiment)

15 [0016] Hereinafter, a first embodiment will be explained. FIG. 1 is a flow chart showing a flow of a wiring formation process of a semiconductor integrated circuit according to this embodiment.

[0017] First, an aggregate of simulation wiring patterns (hereinafter, referred to as a "simulation wiring pattern aggregate") which simulate a wiring pattern of a semiconductor integrated circuit is designed (Step 1).

[0018] The simulation wiring pattern aggregate is designed by combining plural parameters which define a geometrical structure in a wiring formation process. Table 2 represents combinations of 25 the plural parameters.

[Table 2]

A	B	C	D	E	F	H	I	J
No.1	0.3 μm	20 μm	0.3 μm	20 μm	c/c	bs/bs	10 μm	Yes
No.2	1.0 μm	100 μm	1.0 μm	100 μm	s/c	bs/bs	50 μm	Yes
No.3	5.0 μm	200 μm	5.0 μm	200 μm	s/s	bs/bs	100 μm	Yes
No.4	0.3 μm	20 μm	1.0 μm	100 μm	s/s	bs/os	100 μm	Yes
No.5	1.0 μm	100 μm	5.0 μm	200 μm	c/c	bs/os	10 μm	Yes
No.6	5.0 μm	200 μm	0.3 μm	20 μm	s/c	bs/os	50 μm	Yes
No.7	0.3 μm	100 μm	0.3 μm	200 μm	s/c	os/os	100 μm	Yes
No.8	1.0 μm	200 μm	1.0 μm	20 μm	s/s	os/os	10 μm	Yes
No.9	5.0 μm	20 μm	5.0 μm	100 μm	c/c	os/os	50 μm	Yes
No.10	0.3 μm	200 μm	5.0 μm	100 μm	s/c	bs/bs	10 μm	No
No.11	1.0 μm	20 μm	0.3 μm	200 μm	s/s	bs/bs	50 μm	No
No.12	5.0 μm	100 μm	1.0 μm	20 μm	c/c	bs/bs	100 μm	No
No.13	0.3 μm	100 μm	5.0 μm	20 μm	s/s	bs/os	50 μm	No
No.14	1.0 μm	200 μm	0.3 μm	100 μm	c/c	bs/os	100 μm	No
No.15	5.0 μm	20 μm	1.0 μm	200 μm	s/c	bs/os	10 μm	No
No.16	0.3 μm	200 μm	1.0 μm	200 μm	c/c	os/os	50 μm	No
No.17	1.0 μm	20 μm	5.0 μm	20 μm	s/c	os/os	100 μm	No
No.18	5.0 μm	100 μm	0.3 μm	100 μm	s/s	os/os	10 μm	No

A: Simulation wiring pattern; B: First layer wiring formation width;
C: First layer wiring formation length; D: Second layer wiring formation width;
E: Second layer wiring formation length; F: Via hole formation
5 position; H: Dummy wiring group formation position; I: Third layer wiring group formation length; J: Existence of dummy via hole; c/c: center/center;
s/c: side/center; s/s: side/side; bs/bs: both sides/both sides; bs/os:
both sides/one side; os/os: one side/one side

10 [0019] As shown in Table 2, in this embodiment, eight parameters are used to form a simulation wiring pattern aggregate which is composed of simulation wiring patterns No. 1 to No. 18. As the parameters, "first layer wiring formation width," "first layer wiring formation length," "second layer wiring formation width,"
15 "second layer wiring formation length," "via hole formation

position," "dummy wiring group formation position," "third layer wiring group formation length," and "existence of dummy via hole" are used.

[0020] The "first layer wiring formation width" and the "second layer wiring formation width" respectively represent formation widths of a first layer wiring and a second layer wiring. The "first layer wiring formation length" and the "second layer wiring formation length" respectively represent formation lengths of the first layer wiring and the second layer wiring. Incidentally, the second layer wiring is designed to be positioned above the first layer wiring.

[0021] The "via hole formation position" represents a formation position of a via hole which connects the first layer wiring and the second layer wiring, and the "dummy wiring group formation position" represents formation positions of a first layer dummy wiring group and a second layer dummy wiring group. The first layer dummy wiring group is an aggregate of first layer dummy wirings formed along the first layer wirings, and the second layer dummy wiring group is an aggregate of second layer dummy wirings formed along the second layer wirings. The first layer dummy wiring group is designed to be formed at the same height as the first layer wirings, and the second layer dummy wiring group is designed to be formed at the same height as the second layer wirings. Incidentally, the first layer dummy wiring group and the second layer dummy wiring group are designed to overlap each other.

[0022] The "third layer wiring group formation length" represents a length of one side of the third layer wiring group, which is an aggregate of the third layer wirings and is formed in a square, and

the "existence of dummy via hole" represents whether a via hole to connect the first layer dummy wiring and the second layer dummy wiring exists or not. The third layer wiring group is designed to be positioned above the second layer wiring.

5 [0023] Each of the parameters has at least two states. The "first layer wiring formation width" and the "second layer wiring formation width" respectively have three states: "0.3 μm ," "1.0 μm " and "5.0 μm ." The "first layer wiring formation length" and the "second layer wiring formation length" respectively have three states, "20
10 μm ," "100 μm " and "200 μm ."

[0024] The "via hole formation position" has three states: "center/center" representing that the via hole is formed on the center of the first layer wiring and on the center of the second layer wiring; "side/center" representing that the via hole is formed
15 on a side of the first layer wiring and on the center of the second layer wiring; and "side/side" representing that the via hole is formed on the side of the first layer wiring and on a side of the second layer wiring.

[0025] The "dummy wiring group formation position" has three
20 states: "both sides/both sides" representing that the first layer dummy wiring group is formed on both sides of the first layer wiring, and the second layer dummy wiring group is formed on both sides of the second layer wiring; "both sides/one side" representing that the first layer dummy wiring group is formed on the both sides of
25 the first layer wiring, and the second layer dummy wiring group is formed on one side of the second layer wiring; and "one side/one side" representing that the first layer dummy wiring group is formed on one side of the first layer wiring, and the second layer dummy

wiring group is formed on the one side of the second layer wiring.

[0026] The "third layer wiring group formation length" has three states: "10 μm ," "50 μm " and "100 μm ." The "existence of dummy via hole" has two states: "yes" representing that the dummy via hole is formed; and "no" representing that the dummy via hole is not formed.

[0027] The respective states appear the same number of times in the respective parameters. For example, in the "first layer wiring formation width," the states "0.3 μm ," "1.0 μm " and "5.0 μm " respectively appear six times, and in the "first layer wiring formation length," the states "20 μm ," "100 μm ," and "200 μm " respectively appear six times. In the other parameters, "second layer wiring formation width," "second layer wiring formation length," "via hole formation position," "dummy wiring group formation position," "third layer wiring group formation length," and "existence of dummy via hole," the respective states also appear the same number of times. Incidentally, in the case of the "existence of dummy via hole," the states "yes" and "no" respectively appear nine times.

[0028] Next, the designed simulation wiring pattern aggregate is formed on test wafers (test substrates) (Step 2). FIG. 2 is a flow chart showing a flow of a simulation wiring pattern formation process according to this embodiment, FIG. 3A to FIG. 3L are schematic process views representing states when forming the simulation wiring pattern No. 6 according to this embodiment, and FIG. 4 is a schematic plan view of the simulation wiring patterns No. 1 to No. 18 according to this embodiment.

[0029] When forming the simulation wiring pattern aggregate,

plural test wafers (test substrates) are prepared, and the simulation wiring pattern aggregate is formed on each of the test wafers with a process condition which is different for each of the test wafers. Incidentally, 40 chips are formed on one test wafer, 5 and 80 simulation wiring pattern aggregates are formed on one chip.

[0030] As shown in FIG. 3A, a first layer interlayer insulation film 1 is formed on a test wafer W by Chemical Vapor Deposition (CVD) or a coating method for example (Step 201). The first layer interlayer insulation film 1 is, for example, composed of a low dielectric constant insulation material. An example of such a low dielectric constant insulation material is SiOC, SiOF, porous silica, PAE (polyarylether), or the like. 10

[0031] After the first layer interlayer insulation film 1 is formed, as shown in FIG. 3B, a wiring trench 1A, a dummy wiring trench group 1B, lead-out wiring trenches 1C, and electrode pad trenches 1D are formed by a photolithography technique on the first layer interlayer insulation film 1 (Step 202). To form the wiring trench 1A and so forth, first, a photoresist of chemically amplified type is applied on the first layer interlayer insulation film 1 while 15 rotating the test wafer W. After the photoresist is applied, the test wafer is exposed to an ultraviolet ray such as i-ray or a far ultraviolet ray such as KrF or ArF using a mask in which a predetermined pattern is formed. Thereafter, the test wafer is developed by developing solution and a resist pattern is formed on 20 the first layer interlayer insulation film 1. After the resist pattern is formed on the first layer interlayer insulation film 1, the first layer interlayer insulation film 1 is dry etched by a 25 CF-based gas such as CF₄ or CHF₃, using the resist pattern as a mask,

thereby forming the wiring trench 1A and so forth on the first layer interlayer insulation film 1. After the wiring trench 1A and so forth are formed on the first layer interlayer insulation film 1, the resist pattern is removed by ashing.

5 [0032] The wiring trench 1A and the electrode pad trenches 1D are formed to be connected via the lead-out wiring trenches 1C. By this process, on the simulation wiring pattern No. 6, the wiring trench 1A is formed to have a width of approximately 5.0 μm and a length of approximately 200 μm , and the dummy wiring trench group 1B is
10 formed on both sides of the wiring trench 1A.

[0033] After the wiring trench 1A and so forth are formed on the first layer interlayer insulation film 1, a barrier metal film (not-shown) for restraining a diffusion of metal into the first layer interlayer insulation film 1 is formed on the first layer interlayer insulation film 1 by sputtering or the CVD for example. The barrier metal film is composed of a conductive material. Such a conductive material is composed of a metal having a smaller diffusion coefficient than that of the metal composing a first layer wiring 2A and so forth which will be described later, a metal nitride or
20 the like. An example of such a metal is Ta, Ti or the like, and an example of the metal nitride is TiN, TaN, TiSiN, WN or the like. Incidentally, the barrier metal film may be formed by layering these materials.

[0034] After the barrier metal film is formed on the first layer interlayer insulation film 1, a seed film (not-shown) for passing an electric current during electrolytic plating is formed on the barrier metal film by the sputtering for example. The seed film is composed of a metal. An example of the metal is Cu or the like.

[0035] After the seed film is formed on the barrier metal film, as shown in FIG. 3C, a plating solution is provided on the test wafer W, and a plating film 2 is formed on the seed film by an electrolytic plating method (Step 203). Here, since the seed film is also formed 5 inside the wiring trench 1A and so forth, the plating film 2 is also formed inside the wiring trench 1A and so forth. The plating film 2 is composed of a metal. An example of the metal is Cu or the like. Incidentally, the plating film 2 may be formed by an electroless plating method.

10 [0036] After the plating film 2 is formed, as shown in FIG. 3D, excess portions of the plating film 2 and the barrier metal film which exist on the first layer interlayer insulation film 1 are removed by Chemical Mechanical Polishing (CMP) for example, thereby forming the first layer wiring 2A, a first layer dummy wiring group 15 2B, first layer lead-out layers 2C, first layer electrode pads 2D, and so forth (Step 204). Specifically, the plating film 2 and the barrier metal film are polished by rotating the test wafer W and a polishing pad (not-shown) in a state that the test wafer W is in contact with the polishing pad, and by providing slurry on the test 20 wafer W.

[0037] By this process, on the simulation wiring pattern No. 6, the first layer wiring 2A is formed to have a width of approximately 5.0 μm and a length of approximately 200 μm , and the first layer dummy wiring group 2B is formed on both sides of the first layer wiring 2A. Incidentally, the polishing technique is not limited 25 to CMP, and other techniques may be used for polishing. An example of the other techniques is electrolytic polishing.

[0038] After the plating film 2 and so forth are removed and the

first layer wiring 2A and so forth are formed, as shown in FIG. 3E, a second layer interlayer insulation film 3 is formed on the first layer interlayer insulation film 1 by the CVD or the coating method for example (Step 205).

5 [0039] After the second layer interlayer insulation film 3 is formed, as shown in FIG. 3F, a wiring trench 3A, a dummy wiring trench group 3B, lead-out wiring trenches 3C, electrode pad trenches 3D and 3E, a via hole 3F, a dummy via hole 3G, and contact holes 3H are formed on the second layer interlayer insulation film 3 by the
10 photolithography technique (Step 206).

[0040] The wiring trench 3A and the electrode pad trenches 3E are formed to be connected via the lead-out wiring trenches 3C. The wiring trench 3A is formed to three-dimensionally intersect the first layer wiring 2A, and the dummy wiring trench group 3B is formed
15 to overlap the first layer dummy wiring group 2B. The contact holes 3H are for connecting the first layer electrode pads 2D and second layer electrode pads 4D which will be described later.

[0041] By this process, on the simulation wiring pattern No. 6, the wiring trench 3A is formed to have a width of approximately 0.3
20 μm and a length of approximately 20 μm , and the dummy wiring trench group 3B is formed on one side of the wiring trench 3A. Further, a via hole 3F is formed on a side of the first layer wiring 2A and at the center of the wiring trench 3A, and a dummy via hole 3G is formed.

25 [0042] After the wiring trench 3A and so forth are formed on the second layer interlayer insulation film 3, a barrier metal film (not-shown) for restraining a diffusion of metal into the second layer interlayer insulation film 3 is formed on the second layer

interlayer insulation film 3 by the sputtering or the CVD for example.

[0043] After the barrier metal film is formed on the second layer interlayer insulation film 3, a seed film (not-shown) for passing an electric current during electrolytic plating is formed on the barrier metal film by the sputtering for example. After the seed film is formed on the barrier metal film, as shown in FIG. 3G, a plating solution is provided on the test wafer W, and a plating film 4 is formed on the seed film by the electrolytic plating method (Step 10 207). Here, since the seed film is also formed inside the wiring trench 3A and so forth, the plating film 4 is also formed inside the wiring trench 3A and so forth.

[0044] After the plating film 4 is formed, as shown in FIG. 3H, the wafer W is polished by, for example, the CMP to remove excess portions of the plating film 4 and the barrier metal film which exist on the second layer interlayer insulation film 3, thereby forming a second layer wiring 4A, a second layer dummy wiring group 4B, second layer lead-out layers 4C, second layer electrode pads 4D and 4E, and so forth (Step 208).

20 [0045] By this process, on the simulation wiring pattern No. 6, the second layer wiring 4A is formed to have a width of approximately 0.3 μm and a length of approximately 20 μm , and the second layer dummy wiring group 4B is formed on one side of the second layer wiring 4A.

25 [0046] After the second layer wiring 4A and so forth are formed, as shown in FIG. 3I, a third layer interlayer insulation film 5 is formed on the second layer interlayer insulation film 3 by the CVD or the coating method for example (Step 209).

[0047] After the third layer interlayer insulation film 5 is formed, as shown in FIG. 3J, a wiring trench group 5A, electrode pad trenches 5B and 5C, and contact holes 5D and 5E are formed on the third layer interlayer insulation film 5 by the photolithography technique (Step 210).

[0048] The wiring trench group 5A is formed directly above the intersection of the first layer wiring 2A and the second layer wiring 4A, and formed in a square as a whole. The contact holes 5D are for connecting the second layer electrode pads 4D and third layer electrode pads 6B which will be described later, and the contact holes 5E are for connecting the second layer electrode pads 4E and third layer electrode pads 6C which will be described later. By this process, on the simulation wiring pattern No. 6, the wiring trench group 5A is formed in a square having a length of 50 μm on a side.

[0049] After the wiring trench group 5A and so forth are formed on the third layer interlayer insulation film 5, a barrier metal film (not-shown) for restraining a diffusion of metal into the third layer interlayer insulation film 5 is formed on the third layer interlayer insulation film 5 by the sputtering or the CVD for example.

[0050] After the barrier metal film is formed on the third layer interlayer insulation film 5, a seed film (not-shown) for passing an electric current during electrolytic plating is formed on the barrier metal film by the sputtering for example.

[0051] After the seed film is formed on the barrier metal film, as shown in FIG. 3K, a plating solution is provided on the test wafer W, and a plating film 6 is formed on the seed film by the electrolytic

plating method (Step 211).

[0052] After the plating film 6 is formed, as shown in FIG. 3L, polishing is applied by, for example, the CMP to remove excess portions of the plating film 6 and the barrier metal film which exist 5 on the third layer interlayer insulation film 5, thereby forming a third layer wiring group 6A, the third layer electrode pads 6B and 6C, and so forth (Step 212). By this process, on the simulation wiring pattern No. 6, the third layer wiring group 6A is formed in a square having a length of 50 μm on a side. The formed simulation 10 wiring patterns No. 1 to No. 18 are in a state shown in FIG. 4.

[0053] Next, on the formed simulation wiring pattern aggregate, the respective test wafers W are evaluated to thereby detect the most suitable process condition for all the simulation wiring 15 patterns No. 1 to No. 18 (Step 3). Specifically, probes (not-shown) are brought into contact with each of the third layer electrode pads 6B and 6C of the simulation wiring patterns No. 1 to No. 18 and an electric current is applied to the first layer wiring 2A and the second layer wiring 4A in order to measure a via resistance at the moment. Then, a statistical analysis is performed for each of the 20 test wafers W based on the measured via resistance, thereby detecting the most suitable process condition for all the simulation wiring patterns No. 1 to No. 18.

[0054] Finally, the wiring pattern of the semiconductor integrated circuit is formed with the detected process condition 25 (Step 4). Consequently, the wiring formation process of the semiconductor integrated circuit shown in FIG. 1 is completed.

[0055] According to this embodiment, a large number of simulation circuit patterns can be evaluated by the small number of simulation

circuit patterns. Specifically, 4374 simulation wiring patterns exist by combining all the parameters. With respect to these patterns, in this embodiment, each of the states appears the same number of times in the respective parameters to make an orthogonal 5 state, which makes it possible to achieve, only by forming and evaluating the 18 simulation wiring patterns No. 1 to No. 18, evaluation results approximately identical to those of simulation wiring patterns obtained by combining all the parameters. Therefore, a large number of simulation wiring patterns can be 10 evaluated by the small number of simulation wiring patterns.

[0056] According to this embodiment, the yield of a semiconductor integrated circuit can be improved. Specifically, as described above, the evaluation results approximately identical to those of the simulation wiring patterns obtained by combining all the 15 parameters can be achieved by evaluating the simulation wiring patterns No. 1 to No. 18, so that the process condition which is suitable for the simulation wiring patterns No. 1 to No. 18 is also suitable for the large number of simulation wiring patterns obtained by combining all the parameters. In this embodiment, the wiring 20 pattern is formed with the process condition which is suitable for the simulation wiring patterns No. 1 to No. 18, so that the yield of the semiconductor integrated circuit can be improved.

(Example)

[0057] Hereinafter, an example will be explained. In this 25 example, a process condition is detected by using the same technique as that of the first embodiment, and an initial yield of fabricating semiconductor integrated circuits with the detected process condition is checked. Further, the process condition is modified

thereafter by the same technique, and a yield of fabricating semiconductor integrated circuits with the modified process condition is also checked. Incidentally, as a comparison example for comparing with this example, a process condition is detected
5 by using a conventional technique which mainly has reference states, and an initial yield of fabricating semiconductor integrated circuits with the detected process condition is checked. Further, the process condition is modified thereafter by the same technique, and a yield of fabricating semiconductor integrated circuits with
10 the modified process condition is also checked.

[0058] Results will be explained below. FIG. 5 is a graph representing a relation between a yield and a time according to the example. As shown in FIG. 5, the initial yield in this example is higher than the initial yield in the comparison example. From this
15 result, it is confirmed that the process condition detected by the technique in this example is suitable for circuit patterns in various shapes. Further, an improvement rate of the yield in this example is also higher than an improvement rate of the yield in the comparison example. From this result, it is confirmed that the technique in
20 this example is also effective in the case of modifying the process condition.

(Second Embodiment)

[0059] Hereinafter, a second embodiment will be explained. In this embodiment, an example of applying the process condition
25 detecting method explained in the above-described first embodiment to a transistor formation process will be explained.

[0060] First, an aggregate of simulation transistor patterns (hereinafter, referred to as a "simulation transistor pattern

aggregate") which simulate transistor patterns of a semiconductor integrated circuit is designed (Step 1). The respective simulation transistor patterns are designed by combining plural parameters which define a geometrical structure in a transistor formation process. Table 3 represents combinations of the plural parameters.

[Table 3]

K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S
No.1	40%	1.0 μm	Island	0.12 μm	0.3 μm	0.10 μm	Large	0.1 μm
No.2	40%	1.0 μm	T shape	0.15 μm	0.5 μm	0.11 μm	Medium	0.2 μm
No.3	40%	1.0 μm	L shape	0.20 μm	1.0 μm	0.12 μm	Small	0.3 μm
No.4	40%	2.0 μm	Island	0.15 μm	0.3 μm	0.11 μm	Small	0.3 μm
No.5	40%	2.0 μm	T shape	0.20 μm	0.5 μm	0.12 μm	Large	0.1 μm
No.6	40%	2.0 μm	L shape	0.12 μm	1.0 μm	0.10 μm	Medium	0.2 μm
No.7	40%	5.0 μm	Island	0.12 μm	0.5 μm	0.12 μm	Medium	0.3 μm
No.8	40%	5.0 μm	T shape	0.15 μm	1.0 μm	0.10 μm	Small	0.1 μm
No.9	40%	5.0 μm	L shape	0.20 μm	0.3 μm	0.11 μm	Large	0.2 μm
No.10	80%	1.0 μm	Island	0.20 μm	1.0 μm	0.11 μm	Medium	0.1 μm
No.11	80%	1.0 μm	T shape	0.12 μm	0.3 μm	0.12 μm	Small	0.2 μm
No.12	80%	1.0 μm	L shape	0.15 μm	0.5 μm	0.10 μm	Large	0.3 μm
No.13	80%	2.0 μm	Island	0.20 μm	0.5 μm	0.10 μm	Small	0.2 μm
No.14	80%	2.0 μm	T shape	0.12 μm	1.0 μm	0.11 μm	Large	0.3 μm
No.15	80%	2.0 μm	L shape	0.15 μm	0.3 μm	0.12 μm	Medium	0.1 μm
No.16	80%	5.0 μm	Island	0.15 μm	1.0 μm	0.12 μm	Large	0.2 μm
No.17	80%	5.0 μm	T shape	0.20 μm	0.3 μm	0.10 μm	Medium	0.3 μm
No.18	80%	5.0 μm	L shape	0.12 μm	0.5 μm	0.11 μm	Small	0.1 μm

K: Simulation transistor patter; L: AA dummy density; M: AA dummy size;

N: AA dummy shape; O: Gate electrode formation width; P: Gate electrode formation length; Q: Contact hole diameter; R: Degree of miss-alignment;

10 S: STI formation width

[0061] As shown in Table 3, in this embodiment, eight parameters are used to form a simulation transistor pattern aggregate which is composed of simulation transistor patterns No. 1 to No. 18. As 15 the parameters, "active area dummy density (AA dummy density),"

"active area dummy size (AA dummy size)," "active area dummy shape (AA dummy shape)," "gate electrode formation width," "gate electrode formation length," "contact hole diameter," "degree of miss-alignment" and "shallow trench isolation formation width (STI formation width)" are used.

[0062] Each of the parameters has at least two states. The "active area dummy density" has two states: "40%" and "80%." The "active area dummy size has three states: "1.0 μm ," "2.0 μm " and "5.0 μm ." The "active area dummy shape has three states: "Island," "T shape" and "L shape."

[0063] The "gate electrode formation width" has three states "0.12 μm ," "0.15 μm " and "0.20 μm ." The "gate electrode formation length" has three states "0.3 μm ," "0.5 μm " and "1.0 μm ."

[0064] The "contact hole diameter" has three states: "0.10 μm ," "0.11 μm " and "0.12 μm ." The "degree of miss-alignment" has three states: "large," "medium" and "small." The "shallow trench isolation formation width" has three states: "0.1 μm ," "0.2 μm " and "0.3 μm ."

[0065] The respective states appear the same number of times in the respective parameters. For example, in the "active area dummy density," the states "40%" and "80%" respectively appear nine times, and in the "active area dummy size," the states "1.0 μm ," "2.0 μm " and "5.0 μm " respectively appear six times. In the other parameters, "active area dummy shape," "gate electrode formation width," "gate electrode formation length," "contact hole diameter," "degree of miss-alignment" and "shallow trench isolation formation width," the respective states also appear the same number of times.

[0066] Next, the designed simulation transistor pattern

aggregate is formed on test wafers. When forming such a simulation transistor pattern aggregate, plural test wafers are prepared, and the simulation transistor pattern aggregate is formed on each of the test wafers with a process condition which is different for each 5 of the test wafers.

[0067] Thereafter, on the formed simulation transistor pattern aggregate, the respective test wafers are evaluated to thereby detect the most suitable process condition for all the simulation transistor patterns No. 1 to No. 18. Finally, the transistor 10 patterns of the semiconductor integrated circuit are formed with the detected process condition.

(Third Embodiment)

[0068] Hereinafter, a third embodiment will be explained. In this embodiment, an example will be explained in which a state that 15 is not suitable for a predetermined process condition is respectively detected in each of parameters, and a wiring pattern is formed so as not to have these states that are not suitable.

[0069] First, a simulation wiring pattern aggregate identical to that of the above-described first embodiment is designed. Next, 20 the designed simulation wiring pattern aggregate is formed on a test wafer W. Here, in this embodiment, the simulation wiring pattern aggregate is formed on one test wafer W with the predetermined process condition.

[0070] Thereafter, on the formed simulation wiring pattern 25 aggregate, the respective simulation wiring patterns are evaluated to thereby detect the state that is not suitable in each of the parameters. Specifically, similarly to the first embodiment, probes (not-shown) are brought into contact with each of third layer

electrode pads 6B and 6C of simulation wiring patterns No. 1 to No. 18 and an electric current is applied to a first layer wiring 2A and a second layer wiring 4A in order to measure a via resistance at the moment. Then, a statistical analysis is performed for each 5 of the wiring patterns based on the measured via resistance, and the state that is not suitable for the predetermined process condition is respectively detected in each of the parameters.

[0071] Finally, the wiring pattern is designed so as not to have the state that is not suitable for the predetermined process 10 condition, and the designed wiring pattern is formed with the predetermined process condition.

[0072] It should be noted that the present invention is not limited to the described contents in the aforementioned embodiments, and the structure, the materials, the arrangement of respective 15 members, and the like can be appropriately modified within a range which does not depart from the contents and purpose of the present invention. For example, the process condition detecting method of the present invention is applied to the wiring formation process in the aforementioned first embodiment, and the process condition 20 detecting method of the present invention is applied to the transistor formation process in the aforementioned second embodiment, but the process condition detecting method can be applied to other processes when they are manufacturing processes of a semiconductor integrated circuit.

[0073] The eight parameters are used to design the simulation 25 wiring patterns in the aforementioned first embodiment, and the eight parameters are used to design the simulation transistor patterns in the second embodiment, but the number of parameters is

not limited to eight.

[0074] The simulation wiring pattern aggregate is composed of the 18 simulation wiring patterns in the aforementioned first and third embodiments, and the simulation transistor pattern aggregate is 5 configured from the 18 simulation transistor patterns in the second embodiment, but the number of patterns is not limited to 18.